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AUTHOR Bell, Wendell
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ABSTRACT

The purposes of this essay are (1) to categorize briefly current approaches to the study of ethnicity in the social sciences, and (2) to suggest for discussion a distinctive perspective on ethnicity. Perspectives of accomodation and assimilation, minorities, cultural contact, social problems, conflict, and power can be used, it is asserted, to represent and explain various aspects of the social realities of history. Ethnicity is defined, here, as: (1) involving a past-oriented group identification emphasizing origins; (2) involving some conception of cultural and social distinctiveness; and, (3) relating to a component unit in a broader system of social relations. The latter includes internal relationships within nation-states, international relations, and interregional organizations extending beyond the limits of nation-states; this may involve some nation states acting in some capacity beyond their own borders. It is proposed that ethnic and racial groups exist and change because certain individuals and groups have decided that something can be achieved by way of having them exist or change in particular ways. It is held that the relative advantages of scale, inequality, and equality provide incentives, as does accurate comprehension of social realities. (Author/JM)

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Preliminary Draft

ETHNICITY AND SOCIAL SCALE:

A DECISION-MAKING AND FUTURE-ORIENTED PERSPECTIVE*

BY

Wendell Bell
Department of Sociology
Yale University
New Haven, Connecticut 06520

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ETHNICITY AND SOCIAL SCALE:

A DECISION-MAKING AND FUTURE-ORIENTED PERSPECTIVE*

Wendell Bell
Yale University

INTRODUCTION

The purposes of this essay are (1) to categorize briefly current approaches to the study of ethnicity in the social sciences and (2) to suggest for discussion a distinctive perspective on ethnicity. This is not to say that other perspectives on ethnicity are not correct or useful. To the contrary, perspectives such as those of dominance and submission, oppression and discrimination, prejudice and injustice, cruelty and violence are valid descriptions of the ways in which members of some ethnic and racial groups have treated members of others. So, too, perspectives of accommodation and assimilation, minorities, cultural contact, social problems, conflict and power have utility in representing and accounting for various aspects of the social realities of history. I have endeavored to incorporate them in the view to be presented here. Three major ideas that may have been neglected in this context serve to organize this paper: social scale, decision-making, and a future-oriented perspective.

I assume that there are past facts, present options, and future possibilities, though no past possibilities and no future facts. Being scientists--especially, perhaps, social scientists--we have had our attention absorbed by past facts, since they appear to have the firmest ontological status. Even action-oriented approaches, offering--as they do--the opportunity of penetrating the future, have been short sighted and heavily-laden with the limitations of both past and present social arrangements and conceptions of them.

I am not suggesting, of course, that past facts be ignored. Rather I offer a theory of history based upon the idea of the increasing scale of society, especially as this involves both the spread of inequalities and equalities among groups and the application of the idea of social justice to real or imagined--that is hypothetical--inequalities and equalities. Yet I wish to stress present options as they involve a decision-making process and future possibilities as they conceivably and really might become the ethnic relations of some future present. Options and possibilities deserve some ontological status, although they may not yet be part of the past with known outcomes.

In this essay, I do little else but to set forth some ideas. Elaboration, systematization, and documentation must await another occasion. My purpose will be served if discussion in our symposium is stimulated.

IMPORTANCE OF ETHNICITY

In a memorandum prepared for a Social Science Research Council conference on comparative ethnicity last April, Robert E. LeVine reminds us that "Ethnicity is a world-wide fact of life." It is as vigorous a force in the world today as it has ever been, perhaps even more vigorous. On the practical level, one cannot help but be aware of the millions of lives lost in civil wars between ethnic groups, in massacres and counter-massacres, whether between the Protestant and Catholics of Northern Ireland or, on a much larger scale of death, the Tutsi and Hutu of Burundi. There is an urgent need to contribute understanding of these destructive processes and of the conditions and choices which might promote negotiation and harmonious cooperation.

Nor can one ignore a positive function of ethnicity: It provides the frame of significant life meanings for a large proportion of the earth's people. As such, it is a major force in the development of personal identity and self-respect.

On the theoretical level, one can view ethnicity as necessarily involving basic processes of group formation and change, loyalty, cohesion, boundaries, and collective identities. Moreover, the groundwork both for theoretical syntheses and new research efforts has been prepared by prior work that is importantly interregional, cross-cultural, and interdisciplinary.

Today, race and ethnicity have become internationalized. They are part of major global struggles against political and economic domination. They are involved in supra-national networks of communication and influence, such as the Caribbean--African--Black American triangle, that carry ideas of ethnic or racial destiny, oppression, struggle, and identity transcending the boundaries of any existing nation-state. Neither ethnicity nor race can be understood adequately within the boundaries of a single society.

DEFINITION OF ETHNICITY

Ethnicity (1) involves a past-oriented group identification emphasizing origins; (2) involves some conception of cultural and social distinctiveness; and (3) relates to a component unit in a broader system of social relations (cf. Morris, 1968). The latter, of course, not only includes internal relationships within nation-states, but also international relations and supra-national inter-regional organizations--both governmental and corporate--and may involve some nation-states acting in some capacity beyond their own borders (for example, Indian and Pakistani governments interceding for their nationals --or ethnically similar people--in Uganda and England). Other criteria, of course, could be introduced, such as those delineating the structures of ethnicity on the one hand and the symbols of ethnicity on the other.

One difficulty is distinguishing ethnicity from other criteria of group formation such as kinship, locality groups, religion, and social class. Thus, additional criteria are needed. Like kin groups, ethnic groups have descent rules. They are maintained by an ideological device of biological continuity that determines membership from one generation to another. In this way a continuing group identity is maintained (Harris, 1968). Thus, (4) ethnic groups are larger than kin or locality groups and transcend face-to-face interaction.

Both religions and social classes, though past-oriented in some respects, are not limited to descent rules to maintain membership the way ethnic groups are. Even where social classes have very low rates of in- and out-mobility, the cognitive criteria for membership do not stress/the idea of biological descent.

Race is another matter. It is a biological reality as defined by gene pools, blood typing, and physical traits. Yet the diversity of social and cultural forms both within and between racial groups as biologically defined make it of little social significance. Social race, only more or less correlated with biological race, is, however, important, and, obviously involves descent rules too. In fact, one is tempted to define social race as an ethnic group that is to some extent visible on the basis of some external physical features that are defined in particular cultural contexts to indicate membership in a group. The fact that this can vary from place to place and time to time and tends to be less--rather than more--correlated with biological race is well documented (Harris, 1968).

For example, descent rules evolved differently in Brazil where a socio-racial continuum developed and the United States where a white-black dichotomy was formed in which any person of mixed biological origins was--and is--defined as Negro or black (Hoetink, 1971). Or to take another example, in the West Indies the interrelations between biological race and other forms of stratification are complex, since definitions of "race" seem contingent and flexible. As Lowenthal (1972) says one changes "color" by acquiring education, manners, wealth, or associates. He says, further, that the West Indian saying, "Every rich Negro is a mulatto, every poor mulatto is a Negro," remains as true as ever, and "When a lady is elegant and a man is a professor, in Jamaican eyes they are not black."

Thus, in this essay I intend to speak of ethnic groups as defined above, including groups differentiated by criteria of social race. Thus, the independent facts of somatic status or genetic differences of biological race, as important as they may be, are dealt with only indirectly through whatever correlations there are with social definitions of and societal reactions to somatic features.

A TYPOLOGY OF TOPICS FOR RESEARCH ON ETHNICITY

At the SSRC conference mentioned earlier a wide range of social science approaches to the study of ethnicity were discussed. These can be classified roughly into nine types on the basis of the general topics or research questions involved categorized by three levels and three foci or modes of study. Most studies of ethnicity appear amenable to classification in one or more of the nine types. Space does not permit more than an abstract presentation here.

The three levels have to do with the unit of analysis involved, whether microscopic or macroscopic. They can be characterized as the (1) aggregational level where ethnic groups are dealt with as unorganized collectivities or populations and measurements tend to be averages of some kind representing the whole

aggregate or a sub-part of it. Thus, studies of the relative size of ethnic groups or average income or occupation of different ethnic groups compared to each other constitute examples.

(2) The organizational level refers to studies that either deal with ethnic groups as organizational entities--that is the organizations of ethnics--or the organizational impact on or consequences of ethnicity. For example, a study of participation in ethnic associations would be a case of the former and a study of institutional racism in a school system would be a case of the latter. The individual may be the unit of study at the organizational level to the extent to which he or she was viewed as an occupant of given statuses or roles in an organizational context and the topic of research dealt with the structural effects of action.

(3) The subjective level has to do with studies dealing with the individual, especially the social psychological aspects of identity and meaning, including the role of language. Although ethnicity involves structures as in the organizational level of analysis, it also importantly involves consciousness and symbol systems. It is emblematic. Studies of the origin and development of ethnic identity among children, of the role of ethnic symbolism in communication, and the determinants of ethnic consciousness are examples of the subjective level.

The three foci or modes of study have to do with the aspects of ethnicity under investigation. There is the (1) developmental or ontogenetic mode that focuses on the time dimension. Here are longitudinal or diachronic studies. Two kinds come to mind. One deals with different stages of the life cycle of individuals, e.g. research questions about the development of ethnic beliefs, attitudes, and identities. The process by which people become ethnics, of course, not only involves learning what they "are" but necessarily learning as well what others "are." When ethnicity emerges in an individual, how it changes through time, how it functions for the individual at different stages of his or her personal development, and how it disappears, if it does, are questions that focus the researcher's attention on sequences through time.

Beyond the experiences of the individual through his or her personal history, there is the further--and more difficult--task of social history, the formation and development of whole ethnic groups and of the societal settings within which they exist. The processual and evolutionary aspects of ethnicity, the contrasting phenomena of ethnic fission and fusion, and of the emergence and disappearance of the very quality of ethnicity itself invite a time dimension in the design of research and in the collection of data.

(2) A second mode of analysis deals with the distributional aspects of ethnicity, that is how a variety of characteristics differ in the way they are located among ethnic groups. Included here are studies of differential distributions of occupations, educational attainments, income, age, marital status, family life, quality of housing, etc. by ethnic group. Distributional studies refer not to treatment as an ongoing process but to existing--present, past, or future--differential ownership or attribution of some set of characteristics.

(3) Allocational studies, however, refer to treatment. What are the policies of government or collective action of corporate or other organizations that affect the redistribution of things among ethnic groups? What are the effective redistribution of things among ethnic groups? What are the effective redistributional acts of individuals qua individuals? For example, how do income tax laws affect redistribution of income among ethnic groups? How do welfare policies differentially treat members of various ethnic groups? How does multi-cultural education affect changes in differential occupational opportunity for members of different ethnic groups? Under what conditions does organized action of an ethnic group association produce a redistribution of benefits to the group members? These questions illustrate what is meant by allocational studies. Allocation affects distribution but is a distinct phenomenon.

The nine types so generated are shown in Figure 1 given below:

Figure 1. A Typology of Topics for Research on Ethnicity *

Mode of Study	Level of Analysis		
	Aggregational	*Organizational*	*Subjective*
Developmental	Type I Growth trends in new and old ethnic populations Trends in ethnic succession in urban neighborhoods Relations of patterns of multi-ethnicity to level of economic development	Type II Effect of colonialism and independence on ethnicity	Type III Impact of duration of stay on continuity or change in ethnic identity of immigrants Influence of migration on the ethnic consciousness of nonmigrants Requirements of "passing" as a member of an ethnic group Universal versus setting-specific personality attributes of ethnic groups Determinants, content, and consequences of ethnic identity and ethnic consciousness Origin and development of ethnic identity among children
Distributional	Type IV Comparisons of ethnic groups by such social variables as occupation, education, income, age, marital status, family size, quality of housing	Type V Effect of institutions and organizations on distribution of power, property, prestige, and privilege among ethnic groups Participation in ethnic associations Participation in major societal institutions	Type VI Visibility of different ethnic groups to different subgroups in the society Determinants of loyalty to different ethnic groups Role of ethnic symbolism in communication Perceptions of distributive justice
Allocational	Type VII Effect of governmental policies on patterns of migration and treatment accorded immigrants Intentions of ethnic associations and governments to change the distribution of social variables (see Type IV)	Type VIII Functions of such institutions as the police, churches, schools, the military, and trade unions as vehicles of ethnic communication, occupational placement, and collective decision making Functions of ethnicity in mobilizing previously unmobilized sections of the population Effectiveness of different organizational forms in reconciliation and conflict resolution Forms and consequences of governmental responses to ethnic demands	Type IX Manipulation and utilization of ethnic identities by the state Political, economic, and social functions of stressing ethnic identity Conditions in which individuals stress one ethnic identity rather than another

*From Bell (1974b).

In keeping with the broad perspective on ethnicity established by this typology, some other considerations are:

1. Current efforts of public or other institutions to respond to ethnic pressure offer excellent opportunities to conduct evaluation research, especially studies of allocation and its effects on distribution.

2. An adequate comparative framework for research and theory on ethnicity should include, ultimately, nonindustrial and industrializing as well as industrial societies; where possible, socialist and nonsocialist countries; and both old and new states that have known colonial dependency in its various forms.

3. Data for the United States, of course, should be viewed within such a comparative framework.

4. Minority group social scientists are being encouraged to study their own and other ethnic groups, thus combating bias and balancing perspectives. We are all now aware of the dangers of ethnocentrism in social science, especially when the cultures, languages, and styles of different groups are concerned. This does not mean to say, however, that one cannot study ethnic groups different from one's own.

5. Theories of ethnicity should not be limited to subordinate or minority groups. In some important sense the term "ethnic" applies to everyone, including members of dominant or majority groups. The degree of consciousness, identification, and loyalty, however, can vary tremendously. Theories of the oppressed, of suffering, of struggle, for example, need to be enlarged, to include not only the oppressed but the oppressors; not only those who suffer, but those who inflict suffering; not only those who struggle, but those who are struggled against. Furthermore, they need to include a consideration of the ways in which oppressed and oppressors depend on and need each other in particular societal contexts.

6. The special conditions of bicultural and bilingual groups may offer exceptional advantages for ethnic researchers. The struggle to balance ethnic allegiances by people with more than one ethnic tie may reveal the phenomenon of ethnicity in its various dimensions more explicitly than in the uni-ethnic situation.

7. The various social science disciplines obviously are differentially tied to the several levels and modes shown in Figure 1. Psychologists and cultural anthropologists work more on the subjective level; sociologists, structural anthropologists, and political scientists on the organizational; and economists and demographers on the aggregational. Historians share the developmental mode with some members of each of the other disciplines. Economists and sociologists may emphasize the distributional mode, and political scientists the allocational.

8. Finally, the single most important type of research suggested at the SSRC conference was research on topics combining several different levels or modes (thus major concerns of different disciplines). For example, it was suggested that the interrelations between the structural and subjective aspects of ethnicity, between objective conditions and specific forms of ethnic consciousness, was a key subject of inquiry.

In the remainder of this essay, I attempt to formulate some preliminary considerations for a multi-level and multi-foci theory of ethnicity, based importantly on the developmental notion of increasing social scale, the distributional implications of equality-inequality, and the allocational consequences of decision-making. Moreover, attention is directed to implications for alternative futures, which are contingent and open.

INCREASES IN THE SCALE OF SOCIETY

An analysis of social trends shows that one major change in social organization over the centuries can be summarized as increases in the scale of society. It includes an increase in the numbers of human organizations as well as the increase in the size of organizations. Generally, human society has been expanding in people, in total power, in internal inclusiveness, in space, and in time. This is, of course, not to say that there have never been contractions in scale in the course of human evolution. There have, but the long-term non-repetitive movements of the time series have been toward the increase in the scale of society: the scope of social interaction and interdependency has increased for most of the people on earth (Wilson and Wilson, 1945).

More and more people are being linked together and drawn into networks of relations that have been expanding territorially with increasingly dense and extensive patterns of communication and transportation. Also, human society has been expanding through time by the spread of literacy, increasing education, the writing and reading of history, and by the increasing knowledge of the distant past resulting from archeological research. More contemporary humans are "in touch" with more of the past than ever before. Thus, consciousness, both of past times and other peoples and places contemporaneously has expanded.

Along with the expanding consciousness of widening relations and dependence on past and contemporaneous groups has come in increased awareness of the future. Most people may still be focused on the present and the near future, tomorrow or next week. But one can see that the trend is toward a longer view of the future, a greater concern with the future consequences of present actions, and an increase in expectations that some future time will be better--or can be made better--than they present in important respects. Both the revolution of rising expectations and the conception of the earth as a single system from the ecological point of view reflect the spatial and temporal increase in the scale of society.

Some sort of space-time grid, such as that given in Figure 2 on the following page, would be useful to chart the spatial and temporal perspectives of individuals and groups with respect to the various scales of organization, interaction, or consciousness implied by different criteria of group formation or reference. It seems safe to say that most people's perspectives in the course of human development, at least until recent years, have focused on rather narrow time bands of the near past, present, and immediate future and on the smaller scale geographical and social spatial entities, at most kin and locality groups. But in the last two centuries scale has increased, especially with the spread of the nation-state, global--and even larger scale--perspectives have grown and longer time spans, both into the past and far future, are increasingly common. "Citizens" of the earth or universe, however, will no doubt remain rare for many years to come.

Increased mobility is another aspect of increasing scale. There are, of course, the great interregional migrations, including the slave trade, that redistributed the earth's population. There are also the flows, in the United States for example, from farm to city, south to north, east to west, and city to suburb, as the case may be. There is also the sheer increase of movement, both change of residence and travel per se, between and within countries and cities, including the daily or twice-daily currents between home and work.

The increase in the scale of society is not offered as a cosmic principle or an impersonal social force. Rather, one assumes that there are definite advantages in increased scale that are weighed against the disadvantages by some persons who then decide for or against taking those actions that they hope will result in achieving the benefits they perceive.

SOCIAL SCALE AND ETHNICITY

Ethnicity and race are involved in the trend toward increasing social scale in a number of ways. One is, as Foltz (1974) points out, that ethnicity and race are fundamentally relational: "an ethnic group can define itself as such only by virtue of contact and comparison with other people whom its members define as being different." Thus, ethnicity and race in this sense are created as social phenomena by increases in scale, both through increased geographical movement of people and the redefinition of society to include more and more people in the same society. Although the contacts between diverse groups may create ethnic "relations," they also create the preconditions for the reduction of ethnic heterogeneity. This is so because social interaction among diverse groups makes possible, although it does not make certain, cultural diffusion, exchange, and innovation and because social interaction permits sexual interaction leading to mixed biological types and often mixed social and cultural types as well. This occurs, of course, even when there is conflict.

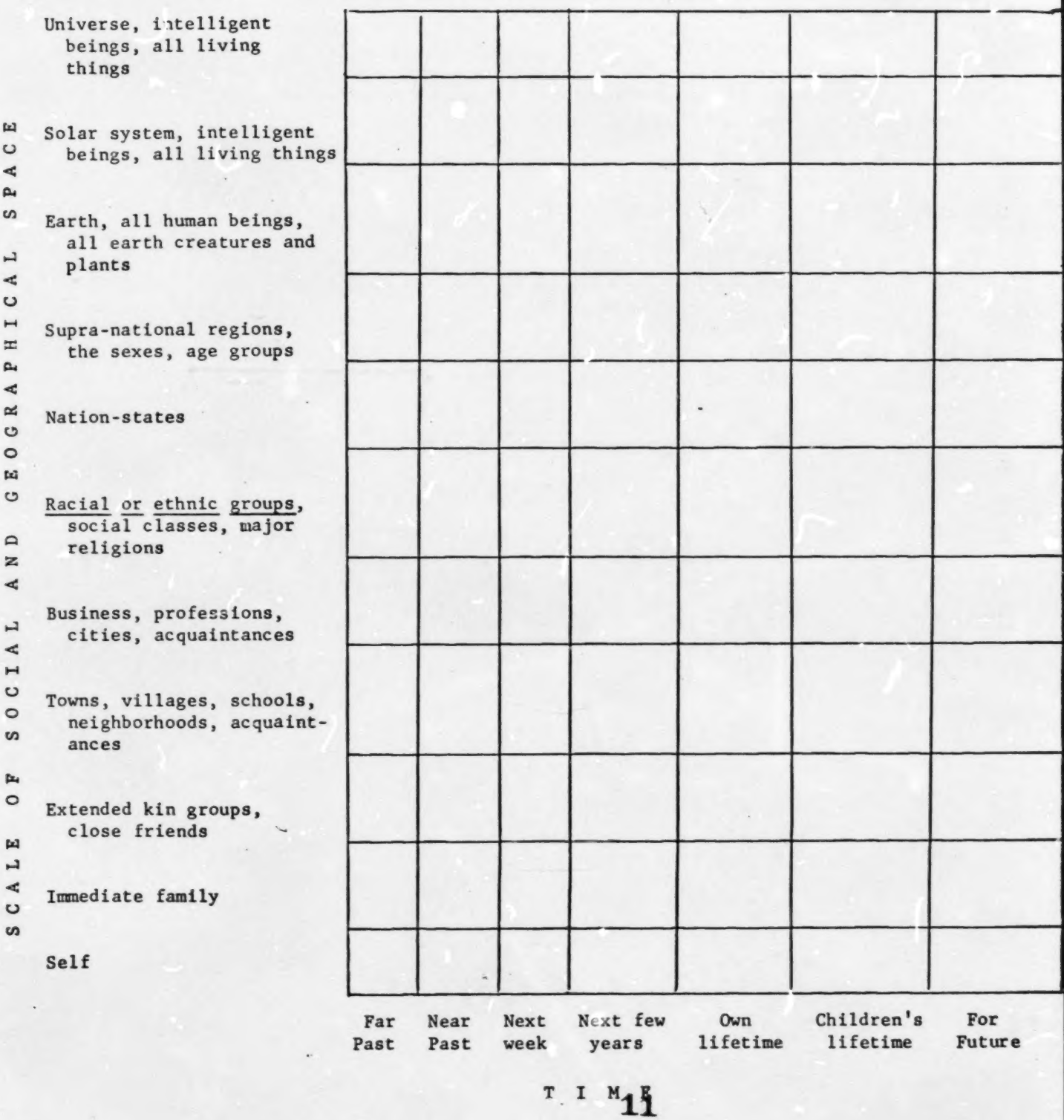

Figure 2. Space-Time Perspectives. (Adapted from Meadows et al, 1972:19)

Another way in which ethnicity and race are involved in the trend toward increasing scale is that each is itself a way of organizing people. Depending on what ethnic group or what race one considers, the scale created by ethnic identity and organization would vary. Some would be very large, such as those defined by the Chinese or Western civilizations. Even if the latter were subdivided into French-speaking and English-speaking units, for example, the resulting collectivities would be relatively large in scale, while many other ethnic groups such as the Bretons in France or the Kurds in the Middle East would constitute units relatively small in scale.

With respect to race, one finds in the examples of négritude or Black Power an effort to combine people who are otherwise quite diverse in language, culture, tribal and national affiliation into a unity of a shared past and a common destiny. The mobilization of all blacks, for example, into a cohesive organization would result in a large scale unit, but it has an obvious limit: Brown, yellow, red, and white people, to use inadequate terms, would be excluded at the point of largest scale permitted by the racial criterion of organization and by social definition could have only external relations with blacks.

The increase in the scale of society has meant an increase in total human power, an increase in social mobilization. It has meant more coordination, control, and direction and the rise of managerial and supervisory personnel which has taken a variety of different forms of legitimacy and authority and has included such diverse entities as United Fruit, General Motors, the government bureaucracy of the Soviet Union, and new governing bodies of the new states, although in the latter case their power is small compared to that of both governments and some corporations in the developed societies.

Such power and control, of course, has developed systematically into some hands and not others, hands in large part that are differentiated by race and ethnicity. Thus, if the fruits of development have been unequally distributed and if exploitation and oppression have occurred, as they obviously have, then an equally obvious by-product has been ethnic and racial inequality, exploitation, and oppression. There are, of course, individual exceptions in that some members of oppressed groups may escape economic insecurity and social degration one way or another. But the general social context is nonetheless defined in the language and by the presumed virtues of the ethnic groups who hold power and it is defined to their benefit. Distinctive characteristics of the ethnic groups who do not hold power become, also by definition, "inferiorities." And the marks of oppression in the form of lost dignity, self-deprecation, and low self-esteem can often be seen long before members of subordinate groups reach young adulthood.

It is also no surprise to learn that it is frequently members of oppressed groups who decide that they should favor equality, freedom, participation, autonomy, respect for others, human dignity, and the like, as principles that should be applied to all humans. In so doing their own position in a future social system based on such principles would be improved. Such persons, of course, do not always support such notions, some-

times because they are not aware or conscious of the injustices of their situation. They need to perceive the realities of their condition and to evaluate them in a certain way to achieve that, something that often requires the work of intellectuals. Sometimes, even though they have reached a certain level of consciousness, it is because they fear reprisals if they make demands or because they are benefiting individually by working for or cooperating with the oppressors. This is not to say that some members of dominant ethnic groups do not support the same beliefs and do not share the same values. Some usually do because such ideas have a life of their own that affects commitment and action. Also, some additional support may be found in the demands of interchangeability, impersonality, and rationality involved in the large-scale organizational need for adequate performance, though such a need, perhaps, has been exaggerated.

SCALE, INEQUALITY, AND EQUALITY

Two, apparently contradictory, long term trends with respect to social stratification can be identified as aspects of the increase in the scale of society. One is the increase of inequality. A second is the increase of equality. Usually viewed separately, these contradictory changes should be viewed as aspects of increasing scale.

It is well known that as stratification systems have become more complex, inequalities of various kinds have increased. There are, for example, selective advantages of authority and decision systems for the coordination of information and action and for the resolution of intragroup conflict. Such authority and decision systems contain the possibility of vertical organization: differential authority, influence, and power. The advantages of increased productivity, effectiveness, and efficiency of organized and collective action are so well known that no special case need be made here for the fact, yet it is of interest to point out that recent archeological evidence supports the contention that "beyond the maximum size of a few hundred individuals, egalitarian societies (hunters and gatherers, Neolithic cultivators) fragment more because of inability to resolve intragroup conflicts than because of scarcity of resources" (Parsons, 1973:646).

As more people, more lands, more resources have been brought under larger and larger networks of political, economic, and social relations, manifold hierarchies of skill, income, and prestige have developed. Inequalities, including those between ethnic groups, have increased.

Yet equality has also increased. Hereditary privilege has been reduced; elites are less exclusive than before and more accessible to the masses; communication and interaction between formerly diverse groups, while at first making existing heterogeneity visible by reducing group isolation, created the conditions for the emergence of common cultural elements; the status of individuals was redefined so that every adult shared the equalities of national citizenship, a process that has just run its course with the

rise of the new states since World War II; the size of the social and geographical space through which all persons can move freely and equally has increased; ascriptive barriers between people have been eroded; and civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights have been elaborated and extended in waves of inclusion of an increasing number of groups that had formerly constituted the "lower orders," a process continuing still for some ethnic groups and races as well as young and old, women, and the crippled. And the rising minimums of expanded conceptions of human rights are now applied in practice to more and more people by an enlarged definition of who is "included."

Identifying the latter complex of trends as "the democratic revolution" or "the age of equality," some scholars have seen it as a significant movement beginning in the period from 1760 to 1800 in Western Civilization, although its roots can be traced far into the past. It continues in the West and has spread through Latin America, Asia, and Africa (Palmer, 1959, 1964; Bendix, 1961; Bendix and Rokkan, 1962). It is a part of increasing scale in that it constitutes an increase in the internal inclusiveness of societies whose boundaries have been much enlarged.

Increased scale is only possible with the formation of a division of labor and authority and decision systems for coordination. These things, as I have said, give rise to inequalities. At the same time, increased scale is limited by the numbers of available people and resources within the boundaries of given social groups and societies. Thus, to achieve further selective advantages some means must be found to redefine the boundaries of groups in order to include more people and resources. Societies that discover and adopt ways of redefining their membership have selective advantages over those that do not. Conquest, coercion, slavery are available as means--inegalitarian means--to increase membership. But already the first step has been taken towards incorporation by the very fact of establishing interaction and interdependencies between formerly isolated groups.

Once new, larger boundaries of social intercourse are established a variety of specific situations tends toward the adoption of social changes that in some sense produce more equality or which permit inequalities to become generally accepted as equitable. These include such things as "the needs experienced by an established elite (a monarch, an autocratic ruler, a central administrative apparatus) for allies against an encroaching counter-elite: local pouvois intermediares, a feudal nobility, a capitalist or industrialist class," "fears of lower class revolt and hopes of a peaceful settlement of class conflicts," "gradual and reluctant acceptance of a series of faits accomplis" (Bendix and Rokkan, 1962:32), and demands for change resulting from the sense of injustice that comes from perceived relative deprivation (Adams, 1965). Furthermore, because people create rationalization for what they think and do, new moral imperatives that justify them also become forces for social change. Such moral imperatives--e.g., the ideology of equality--also have a life of their own and, thus, an independent effect on the actions of people.

Additionally, equality, as well as inequality, can be seen as contributing to the motivational system. Raising minimums of material rewards has created willing workers and raising minimums of status, such as in the case of national citizenship, has created willing soldiers. In a period of mass production, systems of mass consumption have adaptive value and contribute to the spread of equality and equity in some respects; the mass producers have to find some way of giving the masses of people the wherewithall to purchase the mass-produced products or the system cannot sustain itself.

Furthermore, in the case of equality and inequality, memories of pain and pleasure alone may explain a good part of the desire to perpetuate any given stratification system on the part of those groups that are the recipients of material and psychological benefits. Rising groups, those getting a foothold on increased material benefits, may be most adamant about redefinitions of cultural practices and evaluations since their newly found pleasures can then become legitimated and secure with a consequent reduction of anxiety about them. And, on the other side of the coin, there is some evidence to suggest that lower-status people "generally find it less punishing to think of themselves as correctly placed by a just society than to think of themselves as exploited or victimized by an unjust society" (Lane, 1962:79). The latter phenomenon, of course, would tend to support the conceptions of justice that define such lower status as correct. It is when lower-status people have alternative explanations for their miserable conditions, if and when they are such, that they gain insight and awareness into how the society's system of "justice" works against them that they raise questions of legitimacy.

SCALE, ETHNICITY, AND NATIONHOOD

The breakup of the European empires after World War II may superficially appear to be a reduction in scale, since the geographical size of the empire on which the sun never set seems obviously larger than the geographical size of the many new states that have been made out of the former imperial territories. Yet <u>social</u> scale was in fact increased by the rise of the new nationalist movements and the transition to nationhood. The reason is that the empires reflected large geographical scale, not so much large social scale, the far-flung units being held together by thin strata of ruling elites at the top of a pyramidal structure most of which--from the middle to the base--was composed of "outsiders," the masses of "natives" in their own lands. The nationalist movements involved the mobilization of these masses, and the transition from dependent colony to independent state involved the redefinition of society to include them into the newly established polities on the basis of equality of citizenship. It is true that the resulting new "nationality" became a new barrier, sometimes where little national identification existed before, between the peoples of the different new states and the peoples of other states, both old and new. The founding of the new states, however, and the drive toward nationhood widened the scope of interaction for most members of the former colonies, who had formerly been isolated in small communities and who had had local orientations, by bringing them into systems of national networks of communication, participation, and

identification. New loyalties were created at the national level, internal inclusiveness was increased, and a new and more thorough-going internal unity began to be forged. The population pyramid was no longer like an iceberg with two-thirds or more hidden from view and lost from consciousness.

The "integrative revolution," as Clifford Geertz (1963) has called it, was under way. Primordial sentiments, ethnic and racial--as well as religious, tribal, and others--were under attack by new nationalist leaders who hoped to create a new civil order and an overarching national loyalty. Compared to the colonial inequalities that submerged huge proportions of native populations, the new states were at once larger in scale with the beginning of mass participation and the creation of national citizenries.

But primordial groups have frequently conflicted with the emergent nationality of new states for the individual's highest loyalty and they provide alternative ways of organizing and identifying. Sometimes they are smaller in scale than the state itself and promote separatist tendencies, sometimes they are larger and promote a sense of political dismemberment and a desire for unification on a larger scale based on primordial ties such as the case of pan-Arabism and greater Somalism.

Ethnicity and race, even while competing with the emergent nation, have often become redefined on a larger scale than before as a result of nation-building activities. After reviewing the cases of several new states, Geertz (1963:153-154), for example, concluded that one common developmental tendency stood out:

> ". . . the aggregation of independently defined, specifically outlined traditional primordial groups into larger, more diffuse units whose implicit frame of reference is not the local scene but the 'nation' in the sense of the whole society encompassed by the new civil state. The leading principle in terms of which this lumping is mainly carried out varies--region in Indonesia, race in Malaya, language in India, religion in Lebanon, custom in Morocco, and quasi-kinship in Nigeria. . . . It is a progressive extension of the sense of primordial similarity and difference generated from the direct and protracted encounter of culturally diverse groups in local contexts to more broadly defined groups of a similar sort interacting within the framework of the entire national society.
>
> "The emergence of a nation-wide system of 'ethnic blocs' engaged in 'total relations with one another' sets the stage for a direct clash between personal identity and political integrity in the new states. By generalizing and extending tribal, racial, linguistic, or other principles of primordial solidarity, such a system permits the maintenance of a profoundly rooted 'consciousness of kind,' and relates that consciousness to the developing civil order. It allows one to continue to claim public acknowledgement of one's existence and import in terms of the familiar symbols of group

> uniqueness, while at the same time becoming more and more drawn into a political society cast in a wholly different mold than the 'natural' community those symbols define. But, on the other hand, it also simplifies and concentrates group antagonisms, raises the specter of separatism by superimposing a comprehensive political significance upon those antagonisms, and, particularly, when the crystallizing ethnic blocs outrun state boundaries, stirs international controversies."

Statehood, then, although it may not do away with primordial attachments, transforms them and raises them to a higher level of scale by shifting the focus of attention to the relationships between large sub-populations on the national stage. To take an example with which I am familiar, the conception of Jamaican society, popularized by M. G. Smith (e.g., 1965), as being plurally divided into white, brown, and black sections could arise only if Jamaica were in some important sense a single social unit. For a small island-society such as Jamaica such unity may have occurred earlier, but certainly the island-wide riots and disturbances of 1937-38 and the transition to political independence which began in 1944 and culminated in 1962 gave impetus to the idea of Jamaica as a single society, while also, pari passu, increasing the validity of the tripartite ethnic-racial divisions identified by Smith, themselves larger in scale than the various regional and community types that had further subdivided Jamaica.

CONCLUSION

When people decide to form a new nation-state, they embark upon a task that involves them in changing, or attempting to change, the boundaries, membership, degree of autonomy, coalitions, organizational structure, internal relationships, history, and personal character of some existing pattern of relationships. At each step of the way they are confronted with possible alternatives that must be made (Bell and Oxaal, 1964). Decisions are inconceivably without images of the future, since assessments of the future consequences of action, intended or unintended, are what decision-making is all about. Thus, considerations of alternative futures are necessarily involved in the decisions of nationhood.

By analogy, the same can be said of the decisions of ethnicity. Ethnic and racial groups exist and change not by nature or chance but because certain individuals and groups have decided that something can be achieved by way of having them exist or change in particular ways. The relative advantages of scale, inequality and equality, provide incentives. So, too, does accurate comprehension of social realities. Self-interest, when accurately recognized, can lead not simply to group conflict but also to social justice, as in the cases of the demand for equality by subordinate or dispossessed groups or the contradictory demand for inequality by powerful groups. The extent to which each articulates a standard of comparison, justifies it with some logical thought, organizes facts on the ratios of

contributions and rewards to be compared, and justifies the groups to be compared a form of exploratory and trial-by-error learning can take place. The appropriate standards of comparisons--frames of reference--become open for negotiation; the amount of authority necessary to get a particular collective societal job done can become a matter of fact for given times and places and the claims for differential power, prestige, property, and privilege scaled accordingly. In this way, uncomprehending loyalty to existing routines of interdependency, ethnic identities and organization, and the inequalities that flow from them can come under attack as being inequitable and, in their justifications, factually wrong. Merit can be measured although the debate over appropriate measures may continue.

Furthermore, as many writers have pointed out the nation-state as the chief reference point for priority over other forms of organization may be in the process of eroding. Enloe (1973:271), for example, turns to ethnicity as ". . . a harbinger of a new form of political community, one more open to extrapolity relationships and more tolerant of localized power." Given the tenacity with which ethnic memberships and identities persist it may be more than mere whimsy to consider seriously such a suggestion. The hoped-for images of the future of some Basque nationalists are a case in point: "the disintegration of the European historical states. . . and their substitution by a united Europe based on ethnic-linguistic-historical fatherlands or regions rather than states, reversing the process of national unification that took place through the last few centuries" (Blasco, 1974).

FOOTNOTE

* This paper is drawn from several earlier papers. One (Bell, 1974b) was a report of a Social Science Research Council Conference on Comparative Research on Ethnicity. Here, although I cover some of the same material, I make no effort to limit myself to the consensus of the participants. The others are Bell (1974a and 1974c).

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